

Mosquitoes are a real problem

Like many communities across the nation, our City has an abundance of mosquitoes, both night biters and day biters.

In fact, some experts believe another introduced mosquito, the Asian tiger mosquito which is here to stay, may be increasing in our area. Other species and new diseases may also reach us through travel and commercial activity.

The impact of these new pests on our health and quality of life is not yet known. However, the potential of these and other mosquitoes to spread disease has been clearly demonstrated.

Unfortunately, neither the mosquitoes nor the diseases they may carry respect municipal or property boundaries. All of us must share the responsibility for controlling mosquitoes.

It is important to understand how mosquitoes breed, what you can do to prevent them, and how to protect your family, your pets, and yourself.

Why control mosquitoes?

Besides their annoying bites, mosquitoes transmit serious diseases to humans, horses, dogs, and other mammals. While several tropical diseases such as malaria

and dengue are spread by mosquitoes and might someday become serious problems in our area, this brochure focuses on those most common in our area now.

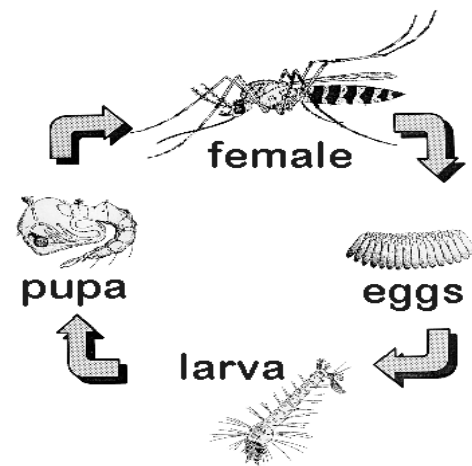
West Nile Virus (WNV) has affected our area since 2001, and experts predict ongoing problems with this disease. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has reported disease transmission through donated blood, pregnancy, and breast-feeding, in addition to mosquito bites. Visit the CDC web page for more info: www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile

Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) is a viral disease which causes a severe and frequently fatal brain inflammation of horses and humans, mainly infants and children. Survivors may have permanent nervous system damage. Outbreaks of EEE have been associated with excessive rainfall during summer and the preceding autumn. In Maryland, EEE occurs mainly in Eastern Shore counties.

Dog Heartworm is an internal parasite that can be fatal to dogs and cats which is spread by many of the same kinds of mosquitoes you swat on a warm summer evening. Ask your veterinarian about a vaccine available for dogs.

Know the enemy

Mosquitoes pass through three distinct life stages before they become adults capable of biting and transmitting disease. The following diagram describes the cycle and shows what each stage looks like when magnified several times.



Drawing by Brett Crans

Don't let them indoors!

Check screens and screen doors to make sure they fit snugly. Repair openings larger than a dime, and ensure that window screens are closed whenever the windows are open.

Brush mosquitoes off before entering your home or automobile. Some species, such as the Asian tiger mosquito, will follow you indoors and into your vehicle.

Don't let them bite!

Wear light-colored clothing, cover as much skin as possible, and use a proven insect repellent. Note: The CDC reports that "Ultrasonic" devices and Vitamin B are NOT effective in preventing mosquito bites.

Don't let them grow up!

Our homes and gardens can become mosquito breeding sites very quickly—sometimes in just a few days.

At least once a week, from May through September, try to take a few minutes to tour your property and ensure that mosquito breeding sites do not contain water that will allow mosquitoes to develop. Dump the water and any larvae before mosquitoes can emerge and fly.

Clean rain gutters at least twice a year—once at the end of May after trees like oaks and maples have finished flowering, and in November after autumn leaves have fallen.

Check for containers or trash in places that may be hard to see—under bushes, parked vehicles or trailers, and under your home or deck.

Involve your kids by making a game of finding and emptying things that hold water.

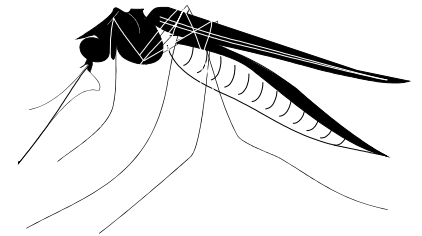
Offer to help if neighbors are unable to perform weekly inspections when they are vacationing, ill, or disabled.

Where To Find and Stop Mosquitoes

- ✓ **Clogged or sagging rain gutters:** Keep them free-flowing, and clean them in May and November.
- ✓ **Old tires:** Our Public Works Dept. accepts them (fee = \$4 each). Call 301-474-4194 for pick-up.
- ✓ **Birdbaths and pet dishes:** Flush and refill them every 4 days.
- ✓ **Uncovered garbage cans, rain barrels, and open buckets.**
- ✓ **Recycling bins and the cans and bottles stored in them:** Keep them indoors until pick-up day.
- ✓ **Downspout extensions, especially black corrugated plastic tubing.**
- ✓ **Flowerpots with drain trays.**
- ✓ **Children's toys such as wagons, sand buckets, and wading pools.**
- ✓ **Boats:** Cover or turn them upside down to keep water from collecting.
- ✓ **Tarps & swimming pool covers:** Be sure water can't collect in folds.

Dead birds? The State is no longer testing birds for West Nile virus. Please shovel dead birds into a plastic garbage bag, seal the bag, and dispose in a garbage can.

Mosquitoes In Our Community?



**We Can Control Mosquitoes
If We Work Together**



This brochure was prepared for College Park residents as a volunteer project of the Committee For A Better Environment (CBE) with the assistance of the Univ. of Maryland Department of Residential Facilities.

For information about CBE and our activities, please visit www.ci.college-park.md.us or call the City Clerk at 301-864-8666.